

“Scaping the Future”: How to connect the youth to sustainable landscape development

Annelies Van Caenegem¹, Lone Soderkvist Kristensen², Veerle Van Eetvelde¹

¹ Ghent University, Department of Geography

² University of Copenhagen, Department of Geosciences and Natural Resource Management,
Section for Landscape Architecture and Planning

Conference theme 5 Landscape Education

Keywords: landscape education, game, landscape aspirations, landscape services (max 5)

In past decades, landscapes have been a subject of rapid and often fundamental changes which have led to pressing environmental, social and cultural challenges. It has become clear that sustainability is now a central necessity in landscape development. Landscape planning and management must strive to balance economic, ecological and socio-cultural functions and values in the landscape, in such a way that these are maintained for future generations. Integrating different scientific disciplines, policy, practice and participation processes is essential when striving for sustainable landscape development. Landscape education and participation processes in collaborative landscape planning could make people more aware of the landscape they live in, its values and challenges, how people use the landscape and which impacts this induces. In this way, local inhabitants and other stakeholders could be (re-)connected to their landscapes and engage in the sustainable development and management of it. However, engaging people in planning processes is a challenge, especially to include the aspirations of young people. The youth is often excluded from participation processes in collaborative landscape development projects. However, apart from their right to their landscape, their input is very valuable as they often have unique views on and perceptions of the landscape and they are the future owners of the landscape. This stresses the necessity for the development of methods and tools that engage the youth in landscape planning processes.

This paper will introduce the game “Scaping the future”, which tries to engage young local inhabitants in an open debate about their landscape, economic and ecological costs of different landscape uses and how they imagine the future. It uses landscape services as a central concept for communicating about the landscape.

Try-outs of the game with pupils from a school in Rødby (South-East of Lolland, Denmark) have indicated that such a game can create an interactive learning environment. By playing the game,

participants became more aware of the landscape, its values, how they use it and the different impacts this has. The game also enables the opportunity for social learning. As participants did not have a lot of background knowledge about the landscape and different landscape values, clear communication, an essential factor for a good participation process, was a challenge. Using landscape services as a basis for communication has proven to be of assistance to the participants in expressing their opinions and thoughts on the landscape.